

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 244

July 25, 1996, 9:10 pm
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FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS/Overseas Drug Law Enforcement

SUBJECT: Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1997 . .
. H.R. 3540. Coverdell amendment No. 5018.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 51-46

SYNOPSIS: As reported, H.R. 3540, the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1997, will provide \$12.22 billion in new budget authority for foreign aid programs in fiscal year (FY) 1997. This amount is \$707.3 million below the President's request, \$161.6 million below the FY 1996 appropriated amount, and \$298.8 million more than the House-passed amount.

The Coverdell amendment would increase funding by \$53 million for international narcotics law enforcement, bringing the total to \$213 million, which is the amount that the President requested. Total funding would still be only half of the FY 1992 level. The cost of the amendment would be offset by cutting \$28 million from developmental assistance and \$25 million from international operations.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

The Coverdell amendment would increase funding for the International Narcotics Control Account for drug interdiction and eradication efforts. President Clinton has actually asked more for this account than this bill will provide. After dismantling this Nation's drug enforcement efforts in his first few years in office, he now wants more funding for this one program. Perhaps he sees the error of his ways; perhaps he is worried about votes in an election year. It does not matter why he has asked for more funding; we should seize the opportunity. For whatever reason, President Clinton is in agreement with a majority of Republican Senators on the need to fund this program.

In 1992, the last year of President Bush's presidency, this program received \$462 million. Last year it received only \$135 million. This funding reduction is typical of the cuts that the Clinton Administration has fought for over the past few years. A recent article

(See other side)

YEAS (51)			NAYS (46)			NOT VOTING (3)	
Republicans (48 or 94%)	Democrats (3 or 7%)		Republicans (3 or 6%)	Democrats (43 or 93%)		Republicans (2)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Helms	Baucus	Jeffords	Akaka	Kennedy	Cohen- ²	Exon- ²
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Biden	Kassebaum	Bingaman	Kerrey	Hatfield- ^{2AN}	
Bennett	Inhofe	Graham	Lugar	Boxer	Kerry		
Bond	Kempthorne			Bradley	Kohl		
Brown	Kyl			Breaux	Lautenberg		
Burns	Lott			Bryan	Leahy		
Campbell	Mack			Bumpers	Levin		
Chafee	McCain			Byrd	Lieberman		
Coats	McConnell			Conrad	Mikulski		
Cochran	Murkowski			Daschle	Moseley-Braun		
Coverdell	Nickles			Dodd	Moynihan		
Craig	Pressler			Dorgan	Murray		
D'Amato	Roth			Feingold	Nunn		
DeWine	Santorum			Feinstein	Pell		
Domenici	Shelby			Ford	Pryor		
Faircloth	Simpson			Glenn	Reid		
Frahm	Smith			Harkin	Robb		
Frist	Snowe			Heflin	Rockefeller		
Gorton	Specter			Hollings	Sarbanes		
Gramm	Stevens			Inouye	Simon		
Grams	Thomas			Johnston	Wellstone		
Grassley	Thompson				Wyden		
Gregg	Thurmond						
Hatch	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

in Investors Business Daily detailed some of those cuts. For instance, between September 1992 and September 1995, the Drug Enforcement Agency lost 227 agents. President Clinton issued an executive order reducing military interdiction efforts, including the elimination of 1,000 antidrug positions. He also shortened mandatory minimum sentences for drug traffickers, and tried to slash the staff for the Office of National Drug Control Policy by 80 percent (Congress restored funding for some of those positions). In his 1995 budget, he proposed cutting funds for the U.S. Customs Service, the DEA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard. The result would have been 621 fewer agents. Congress again restored some of the funding. The military's budget for drug enforcement stood at \$1 billion in 1992 and was cut back under President Clinton to \$700 million in 1995.

Dissatisfaction with the President's policy on drugs has been bipartisan. Democrats have joined Republicans in complaining about the President's unwillingness to fight illegal drug use. Congressman Rangel, for instance, said that "I have never, never, never seen a President who cares less about this issue." Similarly, Congresswoman Maxine Waters stated flatly that, "There is no war on drugs."

Before President Clinton was elected the war on drugs was being won. The number of Americans using illicit drugs had plunged from 24.7 million in 1979 to 11.4 million in 1992. The so-called casual use of cocaine fell by 79 percent between 1985 and 1992, while monthly cocaine use fell 55 percent between 1988 and 1992 alone--from 2.9 million to 1.3 million users.

Numerous surveys confirm that those gains are now rapidly eroding, primarily, and frighteningly, due to drug use among 12-17 year-olds. The number of 12-17 year-olds using marijuana increased from 1.6 million in 1992 to 2.9 million in 1994. Since 1992, there has been a 52-percent jump in the number of high-school seniors using drugs on a monthly basis, even as declines have been recorded in peer disapproval of drug use. At least three surveys have noted the increased use of inhalants and other drugs such as cocaine and LSD. This increased use is not surprising--the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse reports that 12-17 year-olds who use marijuana are "85 times more likely to graduate to cocaine than those who abstain from marijuana." Fully 60 percent of adolescents who use marijuana before age 15 will later use cocaine. Conversely, those who reach age 21 without ever having used drugs almost never try them later in life. The President abandoned the war on drugs and drug use by school children escalated. If past drug-use patterns are any indication, a huge number of those children are going to be hard-core drug addicts later in life. If the trend is not stopped soon, America will likely return to the drug-epidemic days of the 1970s.

Drug interdiction is obviously not the only answer. However, it was unquestionably part of the answer in the 1980s and early 1990s when illegal drug use was sharply curtailed. For whatever reason, President Clinton is willing, this election year, to fund at least one of the anti-narcotics programs he busily gutted in his first years in office. We are pleased at this change, and urge our colleagues to give him the money he has requested.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

Argument 1:

President Clinton has asked for more money for this law enforcement program than Congress has provided. Our colleagues may wish to accuse the President of not being serious about the war on drugs, but if they are not willing to provide as much money as requested, just as they have not been willing to provide as much money as President Clinton has requested for countless other Government programs, then their accusations are pretty weak. We think that President Clinton has a good record of fighting illegal drug use. That observation aside, we must still oppose the Coverdell amendment. Our opposition is based on the offset. We are not willing to cut even more from foreign assistance. This bill will already give \$600 million less in foreign aid than President Clinton wants to spend. We will not go any lower. Therefore, we oppose this amendment.

Argument 2:

We share our colleagues' dismay that the Clinton Administration has, at least until the recent appointment of General McCaffrey on the eve of the 1996 elections, been unconcerned with the growing use of illegal drugs in America. For the past 4 years this Administration has gutted our illegal drug law enforcement efforts, and drug use, especially among young children, has exploded. Nevertheless, we must oppose our colleagues' effort to increase funding for this program to stop illegal narcotics at their source. Our opposition is due to the fact that this program does not work. We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on it over the past decade, and over the same period of time world production of opium, marijuana, and coca has increased. Our strong belief is the only way to stop the supply is to stop the demand with tough law enforcement efforts at home. Our colleagues have the best of intentions--they are not supporting an increase in funding for anti-narcotics efforts as an election year gimmick. Year in and year out they have supported this program. On principle, they are correct; only their solution is flawed. Spending money on international narcotics control is a proven waste of money. Therefore, we oppose this amendment.